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before the ceremony the musicians will continue playing at intervals all night, but the laymen do not start arriving till the next morning. In the morning all those who have been invited by the givers of the feast, which, except in the case of very poor people or very unpopular ones, means practically the whole village, start arriving at the monastery, each bringing with them some contribution in the form of food or *chi*, which will be of assistance to the giver of the feast. During the whole day the lamas sit in their seats in two parallel rows from the altar to the door, except when they go out for a slight rest and change of air. Their food and drink is brought to them at their seats in the monastery and they have permanently a *patyoot* of *chi* in front of them. The worship consists of special readings and chantings from the sacred scriptures interspersed with music.

Owing to the fact that the feasts in honour of Kinchenjunga are given by laymen certain precautions are taken and certain opportunities are given for acquiring merit which are not considered necessary for the feasts given by lamas. The precautions consist of the offering of *cherkem*—grain floating in *chi*—which is thrown out to the devils by a layman with cries of *Lo chi-do*—'take this'—and the burning of a bonfire of aromatic herbs and leaves to gratify the supernaturals. The lay-giver may, if he wishes, acquire merit by performing the ceremonial dance called *da-floh* before the altar, prancing and chanting in front of a folded cloth on the top of which his hat is laid, with the knife to the right and the scabbard to the left. In the evening the altar-piece is perambulated three times round the monastery and is then broken up; the dough is eaten (lamas however may not eat it) and the butter smeared on the heads of those standing round; this butter is regarded as a sort of sacrament which conveys blessings on those whose head is smeared with it. The Dorjé Lapoon in person anoints the heads of the lay-givers of the feasts and their families. Although this ends the religious part of the ceremony, gossiping and drinking may continue all night if sufficient *chi* has been provided.

Calendrical festivals take place frequently, at relatively fixed dates throughout the year. The greater number are apotropaic, intended to ward away those evils inherent in the season: illness in the winter and summer, hail and predatory animals when the crops are growing, quarrelling when the harvests are gathered, misfortunes in the new year, and so on. These ceremonies vary very considerably in elaboration. Some, such as the ceremony to

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585 Somebody of the groom's party will convey this information to the Mun in the other room, who will then perform the necessary sacrifices with *chi*, incense, rice, and the chest of an ox.

When this business is dealt with the girl's paternal uncle will say to the representatives of the groom: 'We are giving this girl to the —— *ptso*; if you are not good to her we will take her back and punish you.' The groom's party give elaborate thanks and promise that the bride will be well treated and happy.

585 522 After this there is a considerable hazing of the bride by the two parties, the girl's paternal uncle referring to her in complimentary *tang-bor*, to which the groom's side will retort, if possible making the remarks obscene and derogatory to the bride, who will be sitting with her head hidden in her head-cloth so that it cannot be seen if she is or is not confused. For example, if the girl is older than the groom the girl's uncle may say: 'We are giving you the yolk of this egg which we have peeled for you.' One of the groom's party may reply: 'It is very kind of you, but it seems to us as if this egg has been considerably nibbled at! And we would not be surprised if her pubic hair were not as long as that of Sor *moong*, or in appearance rather like a field of ripe corn!' 'We assure you that the egg has been freshly peeled—just so as to make it easy for you to eat.' 'Well it seems to us the shell has been off a very considerable time!' 'And what does it matter if her pubic hair *is* like a tangled bush? A clever goat can find its way through any bramble. . . .' Pleasantries in this metaphorical vein continue for some time. If the bride is a young girl the *doubles ententes* will be altered to suit the circumstances; thus, if the *tang-bor* about the egg is made an apt reply would be: 'Thank you so much for the new-laid egg; we will eat it very carefully, just a little bit at a time; in that way it will get used to it and like it.'

585 When the teasing of the bride is finished the lamas return; the bride and groom present the Dorjé Lapoon with a plate of rice and then the lamas chant a formal prayer over the couple called *ong-shu-shet*—a prayer for future children.

585 533 535 After this the rest of the day and all the night is given over to feasting and drinking and singing and dancing. Five young women of the groom's family are appointed to carry round the ladles of boiling water to fill the *chi patyoot*, and five older women to refil the *patyoot* with fresh *chi* and give out the food. The songs are mostly improvised, but there are some traditional comic ones; the girl's *bek-bu* almost always sings in a feigned falsetto voice

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585 the song beginning, ' Father, help me ! Mother, help me ! ' The dancing is completely unorganised, and merely consists of indi-
533 viduals hopping or stamping more or less rhythmically as they feel
535 disposed. Unlimited food and drink are provided, and it is considered desirable and almost inevitable that everybody should get as drunk as possible. There is a strong sexual overtone to the atmosphere and towards evening many couples separate and go off into the forest for a short spell ; they mostly return to the house where the feast is being held before night has completely fallen.

585 At the only marriage feast that I witnessed—that of Ongden with his second wife—I noted ' About seven o'clock the noise was exactly like a very crowded English pub at closing time : the atmosphere was unbelievable. Nearly a hundred very dirty people in two small rooms which had been shut up as much as possible with the balconies closed by wooden partitions and so on ; there was a huge fire of wet wood smoking hard so that one could only just see across the room. In the kitchen some people were sleeping round the fire while others were still cooking ; at one side there was a very bloody mess where sausages were being made from the entrails by three young men ; others were asleep in the muck. In the *dé-ong* the ground was so crowded with sitters and sleepers that there was only just room for the female relations of the husband to circulate with their wooden ladles of boiling water with which they constantly replenished the bowls of *chi* ; they appeared to be the only relatively sober people present. The bride and her party sat as if they had never moved, in their long line against the wall of the *dé-ong* ; the groom wandered about rather disconsolately, talking very little to anyone. Old Adér, who had previously pulled up his dress and exposed himself during the sacrifice, started singing in a minor key dragging over the syllables ; whereupon Lumba's *jethi* (that is his first wife), who is renowned as a singer, got up and asked for some meat to be given her as a fee for the song she was going to sing ; she was given some and started singing, but nobody took much notice though everybody said " hush " ; the singers walked about as if they were cabaret artists. The pace of the evening got slower and slower and sleepier and sleepier ; the children sat about or slept. It would have been very rude for anybody to go home before sunrise the next day.'

585 This marriage of Ongden with a widow was slightly irregular
587 and abbreviated, first because it was for both parties a second marriage, and secondly because the bride had been living with her

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When Jiroong carries out the ceremony at harvest time he must call in the same men who have celebrated to-day; otherwise it means bad luck. The actual harvest ceremony is best done before the reaping commences; but may, if necessary, be postponed. The eldest male living in each house must be the first to taste the new crops. He also offers a small portion to the gods. Should he be absent from home at the time of the harvest a little of the crops first reaped must be put aside pending his return. The seed for the next year's planting is generally selected by the senior woman of the house; but this is not essential and apparently has no significance, although it looks as though it may have originated in some sort of fertility rite. The woman who sings at the time of the planting ceremony (in this particular case Jiroong's sister) must also reap the first three handfuls of rice at harvest time: but, as usual—*Kyet manin!* The singing is done to please the gods.

At the time of the rice harvest, usually some time in early September (the actual day is co-ordinated throughout the district), everyone goes to the fields to dance. I was not present at this time of the year but arranged for a demonstration of the dances, the purpose of which is to separate the straw from the grain. There were about eight different changes of step, mostly various combinations of hopping and jumping, alternating with much stamping of feet. They are "physical jerks" more than dances, and are carried out with great vigour. A lady missionary told me on no account to miss this dancing, since it was "a very pretty and charming rite": what she omitted to tell me, however (and presumably did not know), was that the celebrations are carried on into the night. Anyone who takes part in the dancing must spend the whole of that night in the fields; and on this occasion what is sometimes referred to as "the greatest licence" prevails, the ordinary rules of conduct being completely disregarded. No reason could be given for this orgy; but it is, of course, a well-known fertility rite in many parts of the world.

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597 A childless couple nearly always adopt a child, usually that of some near relation. It often happens that a woman gives birth to a child of her own a few years after she and her husband have already adopted one. An adopted son is better than none; but there is no doubt that the practice is to a great extent resorted to in the hope of getting a child of one's own. This belief is so common that even among Lepcha Christians in the Gangtok district (so Miss Scott tells me) it is common for people to adopt a child temporarily, on the understanding that it is returned to its parents as soon as the adopting mother gives birth to a child of her own. In Jongu, however, the adopted child
[428] does not normally return to its own parents and remains the legal heir of its adopting father, even should he later have a son of his own.

883 Of adolescence there is little to be said except that it does
831 not seem to result in psychological disturbance such as is common in our society. But there is, of course, here no
[521] sexual repression at any time of life. Sex is, indeed, almost the people's sole recreation, and the most common topic of conversation on practically every occasion. This state of affairs is more commonly associated with a society such as our own, in which sexual experience is, to a great extent, denied to the young. One would not expect to find it in a primitive culture in which at no time is there the slightest difficulty in indulging in sex to the body's content. It should
[212 be realised, however, that the Lepchas have no mental
535] occupation whatsoever. They do not read; they do not even dance, except on rare ceremonial occasions, and once the day's work in the fields is done there is only drinking and sex. Whether this is or is not a desirable state of affairs I leave it to the reader to judge; but at least the people are free from the evils which undoubtedly result from the unfulfilled desires aroused by the erotic stimulation of the cinema and such-like shows.

582 Marriage usually takes place between the ages of fifteen
584 and twenty, and is generally arranged by the parents of the

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796 it was at once snapped up by one of the numerous dogs waiting on the edge of the grass for this purpose. This was repeated at short intervals for about an hour, when one of the Lamas decided that it had gone on long enough and threw the remains of the liquid and the *tormas* away without further ceremony.

Palden says that the belief is that Konchen and the other gods come down from the mountain and enter the *tormas* as soon as the service starts and only return to their homes on its conclusion.

At about six in the evening, just when it was growing dark, the whole *Pong Rum* was carefully removed from its place in front of the altar. It was first exhibited to the assembled Lamas inside the building and was then carried in procession once round the monastery. Except for the two men carrying it, the Lamas remained inside the building, but [788] most of the spectators walked behind the offering, some of them turning prayer-wheels and chanting as they went. One man seemed almost fervent (or was it merely the drink?) and called upon the mountain god to bless him; and several told the carriers to halt a moment at the corner so that the gods could see the offering; but by this time Kinchinjunga was completely obscured by clouds. It is believed that the spirits take their departure while the *Pong Rum* is being carried round the building.

As soon as the procession reached the main door again the offering was put down on the ground unceremoniously and quickly torn to pieces and distributed to all present. Some people first put their portion to their foreheads in an attitude of reverence before stuffing it into their bosoms to take home; others treated the host with no reverence and consumed it straight away. Following the distribution of [535] the consecrated *tormas*, Katel, who was rather drunk, put a hat, scarf and two unsheathed knives on the ground in front of the altar and then did a slow and rather solemn dance, keeping time to the beating of the drum and cymbals. It was said that this was not an integral part of the ceremony.

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ad lib.; but not less than one hour!

I found it attractive the first time I heard it; but after several hours its constant repetition became somewhat monotonous and I wished that they could at least have changed the order of the notes. One cannot, however, please everybody, and it appears that the gods like this sort of thing; but, in any case, it was the only tune the ladies knew.

535 *Interlude in Gangtok, 21st August, 1937:*
721 In addition to the worship of Kinchinjunga, which takes place once a month in all the Sikkim monasteries, an annual war dance is held in Gangtok in honour of the mountain, and is attended by people from all over the State. I was glad to renew acquaintance with a number of friends from Lingtem, most of whom were, however, rather too drunk to take much interest in the proceedings.

The war dance is peculiar to Sikkim and is not performed in other Buddhist countries. It is carried out in honour of Kinchinjunga, who is called, in brief, *Dzo-nga,* meaning "the five treasures." He is believed to be the god Kuvera, who is otherwise known as rNam-sras-mDung-dMar-chan—(this is the spelling given me by the Maharaja; after many attempts I have come to the conclusion that it is not pronounceable by anyone with a normal European mouth!)—who is represented as being of red colour, armed, and mounted on a white mountain lion; but, in point of fact, I believe that lions are not found in mountain countries and certainly do not exist in the Himalayas. In Sikkim, Kuvera is invoked as the god of war, and as such has to be worshipped periodically. The display of warlike pomp, in which the dance consists, is thought to be pleasing to the god; and is also meant to foster the martial spirit of the people.

In order, however, that the ceremony should not degenerate into a mere display of demon-worship, Maha Kala, the

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535 commander of all the guardians of the faith, and overlord
721 of all spirits, is invoked by the Lamas to command Dzo-nga to guard the Buddhist religion and the State of Sikkim, and to bring peace, prosperity and security to the people.

All Lama dances are to some extent regarded as physical exercises to counteract the sedentary life of the monks; but the Sikkim war dance is not performed exclusively by Lamas, but also by youths of the upper classes, mostly the sons of the various State officials. It is not so much a dance as a display of agility, discipline, and energy, in which considerable powers of endurance are required. It aims at combining physical training with a feeling of religious zeal and
[834] exaltation; and for this reason all the dancers are required to remain celibate during the month or so in which they train and prepare for the ceremony. They are also expected not to drink during this period of preparation; but during the actual performance, which lasts for some six hours or so, they are kept going by frequent draughts of alcohol. The ceremony is rendered impressive and dignified by the religious rite which is being carried on inside the monastery during the whole time the dance is being performed outside.

789 In spite of the fact that the war dance always takes place during the height of the monsoon, the selected day is nearly always fine, a special Lama being employed to keep the rain away. On the day previous to the ceremony he makes a large figure of a toad out of dough, buries it deep in the ground and lights a fire above it. He meditates inside the monastery but returns to the spot where he has buried the image in order to utter spells from time to time. Several
[813] years ago, so the Maharaja told me, it rained throughout the day of the dance; but when the performance was over it was discovered that the Lama had buried the image of a tortoise, apparently as an experiment to see what would happen. Except for a heavy shower while we were at luncheon to-day it was fine and sunny; but heavy rain came on in the evening and continued for several days almost without stopping.

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535 721 This dance differs from all others of the sort I have seen in that the performers, except for the figures of Kinchinjunga and Maha Kala, are not masked. It consists of an almost continuous slow circling round and round, with a great deal of sword-brandishing; more like the sort of thing one sees at a military tournament, except that the performers are all dressed in elaborate costumes of Chinese silks of various bright and highly contrasting colours.

The warriors formed up in two long lines as each of the two gods made its first entry from behind the dark brown curtains which covered the front of the monastery, after which the slow circling was again resumed. Both Kinchinjunga and Maha Kala did a rather dull *pas seul*, which went on much too long; it, too, consisted of the same slow circling, without any variation in the step. After a time each god gradually danced nearer and nearer the monastery entrance and finally disappeared within. The whole performance appeared to be without either beginning or end, and there seemed to be no reason why it should have ever finished. It was an attractive spectacle for the first twenty minutes or so, perhaps because of the brightly-coloured dresses, after which it quickly became intensely boring owing to the entire lack of variety. The music was provided by drums, cymbals, and clarionets and consisted of the *O mani peme hum* tune which we got to know so well in Lingtem, with the addition of indiscriminate undertones played on the long ten-foot monastery trumpets. I think the tune is more pleasing, however, when sung unaccompanied, as it always was by the Inebus in Lingtem.

The dance ended with the circumambulation of the monastery by all the performers, including the two horses which are dedicated to the service of Kinchinjunga and Maha Kala, and never ridden from the day they are born. They were plumed and draped in thick Chinese brocades and looked most impressive; but considerable efforts on the part of their grooms were necessary before they could be persuaded to take their part in the formal procession.

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793 The Han-bu-ni from Git-biyong gives us a rather detailed report of her initiation. "My maternal grandmother was a Mun. At the age of nine I fell ill and commenced speaking [787 a variety of languages. The people said, 'It is the spirit of 775] her grandmother, the Mun let, who speaks through her.' So my parents summoned a Bong-thing who performed the sacrifice of initiation, offering a bullock, a pig and a goat. Thereafter I was apprenticed to a female Mun for a period of three years during which time I was taught the prayers, the traditions and the ceremonies. After the completion of my apprenticeship the sacrifice was renewed. I was given full powers and began to sacrifice independently. Should [782] I desire to conjure up my spirit, I offer chi, butter, and incense in sacrifice and the spirit quickly responds to my summons to appear. I notice at first a blurred object, like a cloud of dust approaching me. My heart tells me that the spirit is near."

This woman, who is over eighty years of age today, and is Mun as well as Andshemu, has recently become a [797] Christian. We asked her whether the old spirit did not harass her for having given up her former priesthood and ceased to honour it. "Not at all. The spirit does not torment me in the least," she replied. Later she proudly said to the Lepchas, "It is my privilege to instruct this great European priest who comes from China and Tibet, in the teachings of the Mun and the Bong-thing." She was very pleased to find us interested in the old traditions. She knew a little Tibetan, and loved to converse with us in that language.

796 A Rong woman, whose father and brother are both Bong-thing, has narrated to us the following story, "In the evening my father drank chi. This made him excited [535 and he danced through the night. Very often three more Bong-thing came to our house and they all danced together. That is customary with the Mun and the Bong-thing. In the neighbourhood there are three women and two men who hold their dances by turns in each other's houses. This dance festival must take place at least three times a year; —in April at the barley harvest; in September at the first [778 millet harvest, and finally in October at the second millet 782] harvest. Torma (Tibetan expression for sacrificial images)

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of rice and butter are in the first instance brought forward. These are offered with little roasted birds, fish, incense and chi, and in addition a rupee in money. Prior to the actual offering, garlands of flowers are prepared and hung up in the house. The flowers are called "Sa-gi." "Amial" means garlands, and it is from these that the festival derives its name "Sa-gi-sa-amial." The god of power is also called "Sa-gi." "Sa-gi-fat" means sacrifice and annual festival. After the performance of the sacrifice the men and women begin to dance, and during the dance they sometimes fall to the ground and twitch and tremble. They are then lifted up and continue with the dance. The onlookers keep watch to ensure that none of the dancers escapes from the room. The spirit of my father who is now dead has passed over to my brother, Sa-hō."

Next comes the actual vocation. This always takes place during an illness when the physical powers of the patient are at a low ebb. We had the opportunity of observing the case of a girl who was, however, not a Lepcha but a Kami. The sequence of events is nonetheless identical. The child is said to be possessed by a Limbu spirit and at such times she speaks the Limbu language. The people, therefore, insist that she must become a soothsayer. The girl gets epileptic fits and froths at the mouth. The nerves are upset and distraught and the people see in all this a case of possession by the spirit. The girl still is with her parents and prays each day at definite times to the spirit and renders it homage. At a later stage the girl is brought to a teacher; not however to a Lepcha teacher, but to a Nepalese magician, since a Lepcha will not teach a member of another tribe.

All those who receive this summons from the spirit must necessarily answer the summons and go to a teacher who will give them the required initiation, instruction, practices, and teach them the prayers. A great sacrifice, mentioned by the Han-bu-ni Mun above, has to be performed by way of initiation. Gorer describes this ceremony as follows, "In the house a little table is set up. On it to the right lies a scarf of honour with a rupee. In the middle is a wooden vessel which is filled with chi and garnished with butter round the rim. On the right is a stone incense-burner filled with Tibetan

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nor the big flat round Shaman-drum (rnga). For the sacrifice they do not use either the magic dagger (phur-bu) or the thunderbolt (rdo-rje), nor conch trumpets (dung), nor flutes made from human thigh bones (rkang-gling), nor the trident, nor the cup of the human skull (thod-pa). All the above mentioned articles are however indispensable to the Tibetan magicians, the Inner Asiatic and the Siberian Shamans. It is therefore evident, that the Mun and the Bong-thing cannot be identical with the Tibetan Bon-po as some scholars state. They belong rather to that primitive priest class, which has not been influenced by the typical Shamanism which operated in Tibet and spread from there to some Himalayan districts, to Inner and East Asia. The Mun and the Bong-thing are not allowed to practise any black magic as such. This is attributed to them by the neighbouring people, who consequently fear them greatly. During our investigations on this subject we repeatedly heard it said, "Only a wicked and demoralised Mun and Bong-thing would use his powers to harm another person, for their vocation is precisely to help people and to warn off all harm." The Mun wears no prayer cord. When he has to make a prophecy, he calls to his spirit, who comes on to his shoulder and speaks through his mouth. The Bong-thing has a prayer string, which he uses when prophesying. This string however, differs from the Tibetan one and has no definite number of beads.

In the white magic practised by the Lepchas we found many parallels with the ancient Chinese white magic, which had not as yet been influenced by the typical Inner Asiatic Shamanism. There is something in common to both in the matter of casting out demons. The magician compels the demon to enter into a pot of blood. Once the demon is in, he closes the pot and buries it.[57] Their dances have certain characteristics in common with the Wu,—the ancient Chinese magicians. In everything we find the content of the ancient class of magic which was widely spread and which preceded the Inner Asiatic Shamanism. There it received later the typical shaping which today, under the name of Shamanism

57. cfr. Dictionary of the Lepcha Language, op. cit. p. 204 a.b.